Hades

Hades (/ˈheɪdiːz/; Greek: Ἅδης *Hádēs*; Ἀιδης *Háidēs*), in the ancient Greek religion and myth, is the god of the dead and the king of the underworld, with which his name became synonymous.[14] Hades was the eldest son of Cronus and Rhea, although the last son regurgitated by his father.[15] He and his brothers, Zeus and Poseidon, defeated their father's generation of gods, the Titans, and claimed rulership over the cosmos. Hades received the underworld, Zeus the sky, and Poseidon the sea, with the solid earth, long the province of Gaia, available to all three concurrently. Hades was often portrayed with his three-headed guard dog Cerberus.

The Etruscan god Aita and the Roman gods Dis Pater and Orcus were eventually taken as equivalent to Hades and merged into Pluto, a Latinization of **Plouton** (Greek: Πλούτων, *Ploútōn*)[16], itself a euphemistic title often given to Hades.

Hades
God of the Dead, the Underworld, Subterranean Regions, Night[1][2][3][4][5], Dreams[6][7], Curses, Death[8][9], Darkness[10][11][12][13][5], the Earth, Fertility, Riches, the Afterlife, and Metals.

Hades/Serapis with Cerberus

Abode	the underworld
Symbol	Cerberus, cornucopia, sceptre, Cypress, Narcissus, keys, serpents
Personal information	
Consort	Persephone
Children	Zagreus, Macaria, and in some cases Melinoe, Plutus, and The Erinyes
Parents	Cronus and Rhea
Siblings	Poseidon, Demeter, Hestia, Hera, Zeus, Chiron
Roman equivalent	Dis Pater, Orcus

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Name

The origin of Hades' name is uncertain, but has generally been seen as meaning "the unseen one" since antiquity. An extensive section of Plato's dialogue *Cratylus* is devoted to the etymology of the god's name, in which Socrates is arguing for a folk etymology not from "unseen" but from "his knowledge (*eidenai*) of all noble things". Modern linguists have proposed the Proto-Greek form **Awides* ("unseen").[17] The earliest attested form is *Aΐ̓dēs* (Ἀΐδης), which lacks the proposed digamma. West argues instead for an original meaning of "the one who presides over meeting up" from the universality of death.[18]

Amphora Hades Louvre G209 n2; Marie-Lan Nguyen / Wikimedia Commons

In Homeric and Ionic Greek, he was known as *Aΐ̓dēs*.[19] Other poetic variations of the name include *Aïdōneús* (Ἀϊδωνεύς) and the inflected forms *Áïdos* (Ἄϊδος, gen.), *Áïdi* (Ἄϊδι, dat.), and *Áïda* (Ἄϊδα, acc.), whose reconstructed nominative case **Áïs* (*Ἄϊς) is, however, not attested.[20] The name as it came to be known in classical times was *Háidēs* (Ἅιδης). Later the iota became silent, then a subscript marking (ἍΙδης), and finally omitted entirely (Ἅδης).[21]

Perhaps from fear of pronouncing his name, around the 5th century BC, the Greeks started referring to Hades as Plouton (Πλούτων *Ploútōn*), with a root meaning "wealthy", considering that from the abode below (i.e., the soil) come riches (e.g., fertile crops, metals and so on).[22] Plouton became the Roman god who both rules the underworld and distributed riches from below. This deity was a mixture of the Greek god Hades and the Eleusinian icon Ploutos, and from this he also received a priestess, which was not previously practiced in Greece.[23] More elaborate names of the same genre were *Ploutodótēs* (Πλουτοδότης) or *Ploutodotḗr* (Πλουτοδοτήρ), meaning "giver of wealth".[24]

Epithets of Hades include *Agesander* (Ἀγήσανδρος) and *Agesilaos* (Ἀγεσίλαος),[25] both from *ágō* (ἄγω, "lead", "carry" or "fetch") and *anḗr* (ἀνήρ, "man") or *laos* (λαός, "men" or "people"), describing Hades as the god who carries away all.[26][27][28][29] Nicander uses the form *Hegesilaus* (Ἡγεσίλαος).[30]

He was also referred to as *Zeus katachthonios* (Ζεὺς καταχθόνιος),[31] meaning "the Zeus of the Underworld", by those avoiding his actual name, as he had complete control over the Underworld.[32]

Mythology

Early years

Pinax with Persephone and Hades Enthroned, 500-450 BC, Greek, Locri Epizephirii, Mannella district, Sanctuary of Persephone, terracotta - Cleveland Museum of Art - DSC08242

In Greek mythology, Hades, the god of the underworld, was the first-born son of the Titans Cronus and Rhea. He had three older sisters, Hestia, Demeter, and Hera, as well as a younger brother, Poseidon, all of whom had been swallowed whole by their father as soon as they were born. Zeus was the youngest child and through the machinations of their mother, Rhea, he was the only one that had escaped this fate. Upon reaching adulthood, Zeus managed to force his father to disgorge his siblings. After their release, the six younger gods, along with allies they managed to gather, challenged the elder gods for power in the Titanomachy, a divine war. The war lasted for ten years and ended with the victory of the younger gods. Following their victory, according to a single famous passage in the *Iliad* (*Book XV*, ln.187–93), Hades and his two brothers, Poseidon and Zeus, drew lots[33] for realms to rule. Zeus received the sky, Poseidon received the seas, and Hades received the underworld,[34] the unseen realm to which the souls of the dead go upon leaving the world as well as any and all things beneath the earth. Some myths suggest that Hades was dissatisfied with his turnout, but had no choice and moved to his new realm.[35]

Hades obtained his wife and queen, Persephone, through abduction at the behest of Zeus. This myth is the most important one Hades takes part in;[36] it also connected the Eleusinian Mysteries with the Olympian pantheon, particularly as represented in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, which is the oldest story of the abduction, most likely dating back to the beginning of the 6th century BC.[23] Helios told the grieving Demeter that Hades was not unworthy as a consort for Persephone:

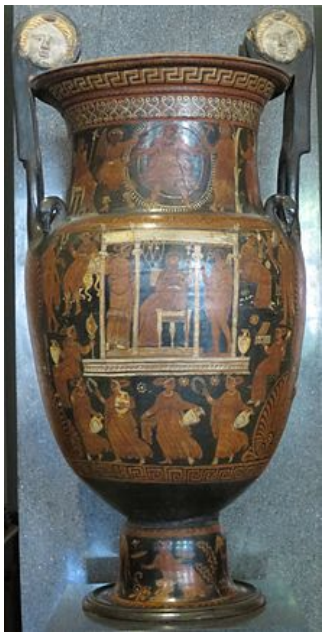
> Aidoneus, the Ruler of Many, is no unfitting husband among the deathless gods for your child, being your own brother and born of the same stock: also, for honor, he has that third share which he received when division was made at the first, and is appointed lord of those among whom he dwells.
>
> — *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*[37]

God of underworld

Hades, Hierapolis

Despite modern connotations of death as evil, Hades was actually more altruistically inclined in mythology. Hades was often portrayed as passive rather than evil; his role was often maintaining relative balance. That said, he was also depicted as cold and stern, and he held all of his subjects equally accountable to his laws.[38] Any other individual aspects of his personality are not given, as Greeks refrained from giving him much thought to avoid attracting his attention.[32]

Hades ruled the dead, assisted by others over whom he had complete authority. The House of Hades was described as full of "guests," though he rarely left the Underworld.[39] He cared little about what happened in the world above, as his primary attention was ensuring none of his subjects ever left.



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He strictly forbade his subjects to leave his domain and would become quite enraged when anyone tried to leave, or if someone tried to steal the souls from his realm. His wrath was equally terrible for anyone who tried to cheat death or otherwise crossed him, as Sisyphus and Pirithous found out to their sorrow. While usually indifferent to his subjects, Hades was very focused on the punishment of these two people; particularly Pirithous, as he entered the underworld in an attempt to steal Persephone for himself, and consequently was forced onto the "Chair of Forgetfulness".[32] Another myth is about the Greek god Asclepius who was originally a demigod, son of Apollo and Coronis, a Thessalian princess. During his lifetime, he became a famous and talented physician, who eventually was able to bring the dead back to life. Feeling cheated, Plouton persuaded Zeus to kill him with a thunderbolt. After his death, he was brought to Olympus where he became a god.[40] Hades was only depicted outside of the Underworld once in myth, and even that is believed to have been an instance where he had just left the gates of the Underworld, which was when Heracles shot him with an arrow as Hades was attempting to defend the city of Plyos.[16] After he was shot, however, he traveled to Olympus to heal. Besides Heracles, the only other living people who ventured to the Underworld were also heroes: Odysseus, Aeneas (accompanied by the Sibyl), Orpheus, who Hades showed uncharacteristic mercy towards at Persephone's persuasion, who was moved by Orpheus' music,[41] Theseus with Pirithous, and, in a late romance, Psyche. None of them were pleased with what they witnessed in the realm of the dead. In particular, the Greek war hero Achilles, whom Odysseus conjured with a blood libation, said:

> O shining Odysseus, never try to console me for dying.
> I would rather follow the plow as thrall to another
> man, one with no land allotted to him and not much to live on,
> than be a king over all the perished dead.
>
> — Achilles' soul to Odysseus. Homer, *Odyssey* 11.488-491 (Lattimore translation)

Persephone

The consort of Hades was Persephone, daughter of Zeus and Demeter.[42]

Persephone did not submit to Hades willingly, but was abducted by him while picking flowers in the fields of Nysa (Her father, Zeus, had previously given Persephone to Hades, to be his wife, as is stated in the very first lines of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*). In protest of his act, Demeter cast a curse on the land and there was a great famine; though, one by one, the gods came to request she lift it, lest mankind perish and cause the gods to be deprived of their receiving gifts and sacrifices, Demeter asserted that the earth would remain barren until she saw

her daughter again. Zeus then sends for his son, Hermes, and instructs him to go down to the Underworld in hopes that he may be able to convince Hades to allow Persephone to return to Earth, so that Demeter might see Persephone and cause the famine to stop. Hermes obeys and goes down to Hades' realm, wherein he finds Hades seated upon a couch, Persephone seated next to him. Hermes relays Zeus' message, and Hades complies, saying,

> "Go now, Persephone, to your dark-robed mother, go, and feel kindly in your heart towards me: be not so exceedingly cast down; for I shall be no unfitting husband for you among the deathless gods, that am own brother to father Zeus. And while you are here, you shall rule all that lives and moves and shall have the greatest rights among the deathless gods: those who defraud you and do not appease your power with offerings, reverently performing rites and paying fit gifts, shall be punished for evermore."
>
> — *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*[43]

Persephone and Hades: tondo of an Attic red-figured kylix, ca. 440–430 BC

Afterwards, Hades readies his chariot, but not before he secretly gives Persephone a pomegranate seed to eat; Hermes takes the reins, and he and Persephone make their way to the Earth above, coming to a halt in front of Demeter's temple at Eleusis, where the goddess has been waiting. Demeter and Persephone run towards each other and embrace one another, happy that they are reunited. Demeter, however, suspects that Persephone may have eaten food while down in the Underworld, and so she questions Persephone, saying:

> "My child, tell me, surely you have not tasted any food while you were below? Speak out and hide nothing, but let us both know. For if you have not, you shall come back from loathly Hades and live with me and your father, the dark-clouded son of Cronos and be honored by all the deathless gods; but if you have tasted food, you must go back again beneath the secret places of the earth, there to dwell a third part of the seasons every year: yet for the two parts you shall be with me and the other deathless gods. But when the earth shall bloom with the fragrant flowers of spring in every kind, then from the realm of darkness and gloom thou shalt come up once more to be a wonder for gods and mortal men. And now tell me how he rapt you away to the realm of darkness and gloom, and by what trick did the strong Host of Many beguile you?"
>
> — *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*[44]

Oil painting of Hades abducting Persephone. 18th Century Oil on wood with gilt background.Property of Missing Link Antiques.

Persephone does admit that she ate the food of the dead, as she tells Demeter that Hades gave her a pomegranate seed and forced her to eat it. Persephone's eating the pomegranate seed binds her to Hades and the Underworld, much to the dismay of Demeter. Zeus, however, had previously proposed a compromise, to which all parties had agreed: of the year, Persephone would spend one third with her husband.[45]

It is during this time, when Persephone is down in the Underworld with her husband, that winter falls upon the earth, "an aspect of sadness and mourning."[46]

Hades abducting Persephone, fresco in the small Macedonian royal tomb at Vergina, Macedonia, Greece, c. 340 BC

Theseus and Pirithous

Theseus and Pirithous pledged to kidnap and marry daughters of Zeus. Theseus chose Helen and together they kidnapped her and decided to hold onto her until she was old enough to marry. Pirithous chose Persephone. They left Helen with Theseus' mother, Aethra, and traveled to the Underworld. Hades knew of their plan to capture his wife, so he pretended to offer them hospitality and set a feast; as soon as the pair sat down, snakes coiled around their feet and held them there. Theseus was eventually rescued by Heracles but Pirithous remained trapped as punishment for daring to seek the wife of a god for his own.

Heracles

Heracles' final labour was to capture Cerberus. First, Heracles went to Eleusis to be initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries. He did this to absolve himself of guilt for killing the centaurs and to learn how to enter and exit the underworld alive. He found the entrance to the underworld at Taenarum. Athena and Hermes helped him through and back from Hades. Heracles asked Hades for permission to take Cerberus. Hades agreed as long as Heracles didn't harm Cerberus. When Heracles dragged the dog out of Hades, he passed through the cavern Acherusia.

Minthe

The nymph Minthe, associated with the river Cocytus, loved by Hades, was turned into the mint plant, by a jealous Persephone.[47]

Cult and epithets

Hades, as the god of the dead, was a fearsome figure to those still living; in no hurry to meet him, they were reluctant to swear oaths in his name, and averted their faces when sacrificing to him. Since to many, simply to say the word "Hades" was frightening, euphemisms were pressed into use. Since precious minerals come from under the earth (i.e., the "underworld" ruled by Hades), he was considered to have control of these as well, and as such the Greeks referred to him as Πλούτων (Greek *Plouton*; Latin PLVTO, *Pluto*, "the rich one"). This title is derived from the word Πλοῦτος (Greek *Ploutos*, literally "wealth, riches"). Sophocles explained the notion of referring to Hades as *Plouton* with these words: "the gloomy Hades enriches himself with our sighs and our tears." In addition, he was called Clymenus ("notorious"), Polydegmon ("who receives many"), and perhaps Eubuleus ("good counsel" or "well-intentioned"),[48] all of them euphemisms for a name that was unsafe to pronounce, which evolved into epithets.

He spent most of the time in his dark realm. Formidable in battle, he proved his ferocity in the famous Titanomachy, the battle of the Olympians versus the Titans, which established the rule of Zeus.

Feared and loathed, Hades embodied the inexorable finality of death: "Why do we loathe Hades more than any god, if not because he is so adamantine and unyielding?" The rhetorical question is Agamemnon's.[49] Hades was not, however, an evil god, for although he was stern, cruel, and unpitying, he was still just. Hades ruled the Underworld and was therefore most often associated with death and feared by men, but he was not Death itself — it is Thanatos, son of Nyx and Erebus, who is the actual personification of death, although Euripides' play

348.976x348.976px

"*Alkestis*" states fairly clearly that Thanatos and Hades were one and the same deity, and gives an interesting description of Hades as being dark-cloaked and winged;[50] moreover, Hades was also referred to as *Hesperos Theos* ("god of death & darkness").[51]

When the Greeks propitiated Hades, they banged their hands on the ground to be sure he would hear them.[52] Black animals, such as sheep, were sacrificed to him, and the very vehemence of the rejection of human sacrifice expressed in myth suggests an unspoken memory of some distant past. The blood from all chthonic sacrifices including those to propitiate Hades dripped into a pit or cleft in the ground. The person who offered the sacrifice had to avert his face.[53]

One ancient source says that he possessed the Cap of invisibility. His chariot, drawn by four black horses, made for a fearsome and impressive sight. These beasts were variously named as, according to Claudian: Orphnaeus, Aethon, Nycteus and Alastor while other authors listed also: Nonius, Ametheus, Abastor, Abetor and Metheus. His other ordinary attributes were the narcissus and cypress plants, the Key of Hades and Cerberus, the three-headed dog.[54] In certain portraits, snakes also appeared to be attributed to Hades[55] as he was occasionally portrayed to be either holding them or accompanied by them. This is believed to hold significance as in certain classical sources Hades ravished Kore in the guise of a snake, who went on to give birth to Zagreus-Dionysus.[56] While bearing the name 'Zeus', Zeus Olympios, the great king of the gods, noticeably differs from the Zeus Meilichios, a decidedly chthonian character, often portrayed as a snake,[57] and as seen beforehand, they cannot be different manifestations of the same god,[58] in fact whenever 'another Zeus' is mentioned, this always refers to Hades.[59] Zeus Meilichios and Zeus Eubouleus are often referred to as being alternate names for Hades.[60]

The philosopher Heraclitus, unifying opposites, declared that Hades and Dionysus, the very essence of indestructible life *(zoë)*, are the same god.[61] Among other evidence, Karl Kerényi notes in his book[62] that the Homeric Hymn To Demeter,[63] votive marble images[64] and epithets[65] all link Hades to being Dionysus. He also notes that the grieving goddess Demeter refused to drink wine, as she states that it would be against *themis* for her to drink wine, which is the gift of Dionysus, after Persephone's abduction, because of this association; indicating that Hades may in fact have been a "cover name" for the underworld Dionysus.[66] He suggests that this dual identity may have been familiar to those who came into contact with the Mysteries.[67] Dionysus also shared several epithets with Hades such as *Chthonios* ("the subterranean"),[68][69] *Eubouleus* ("Good Counselor"), and *Euclius* ("glorious" or "renowned") .

Evidence for a cult connection is quite extensive, particularly in southern Italy, especially when considering the death symbolism included in Dionysian worship;[70][71] statues of Dionysus[72][73] found in the Ploutonion at Eleusis gives further evidence as the statue bears a striking resemblance to the statue of Eubouleus[74] also known as the youthful depiction of the Lord of the Underworld. The statue of Eubouleus is described as being radiant but disclosing a strange inner darkness.[62] Ancient portrayals show Dionysus holding in his hand a *kantharos*, a wine-jar with large handles, and occupying the place where one would expect to see Hades. Archaic artist Xenocles portrayed on one side of a vase, Zeus, Poseidon and Hades, each with his emblems of power; with Hades' head turned back to front and, on the other side, Dionysus striding forward to meet his bride Persephone, with a *kantharos* in his hand, against a background of grapes.[75]

Both Hades and Dionysus were associated with a divine tripartite deity with Zeus.[76] The Orphics in particular believed that Zeus and Hades were the same deity and portrayed them as such.[77][78] Zeus was portrayed as having an incarnation in the underworld identifying him as literally being Hades and leading to Zeus and Hades essentially being two representations and different facets of the same god and extended divine power.[79][80] This nature and aspect of Hades and Zeus displayed in the Orphic stories is the explanation for why both Hades and Zeus are considered to be the father of Melinoë and Zagreus.[81][82] The role of unifying Hades, Zeus and Dionysus as a single tripartite god was used to represent the birth, death and resurrection of a deity and to unify the 'shining' realm of Zeus and the dark realm of Hades that lay beneath the Earth.[76][83]

Among the other appellations under which Hades or Pluto is generally known, are the following[84][85]:

In Greek:

- **Adesius**, his name in Latium. It is expressive of *the grace*.
- **Agelastus**, from his *melancholy* countenance.
- **Agesilaus**, expressive of his *attracting* all *people* to his empire.
- **Agetes** or **Hegetes**, a name assigned to him by Pindar, as to one who *conducts*.
- **Aidoneos**, this name is probably derived from Hades' having been sometimes confounded with a king of this name among the Molossi, whose daughter Persephone, Theseus and Pirithous attempted to carry off.
- **Axiocersus**, or the *shorn god*, a name of Pluto in the mysteries of the Cabiri: he was there represented as *without hair*.
- **Iao**, his name at Clares, a town of Ionia.
- **Moiragetes**, his name as *guide* of *the Fates*.
- **Ophieus**, his name as the *blind god* among the Messenians: it was derived from their dedicating certain Augurs to him, whom they deprived of eight at the moment of their birth.

In Latin or Etruscan

- **Altor**, from *alo*, to nourish.
- **Februus**, from *Februa*, signifying the sacrifices and purifications adopted in funeral rites.
- **Feralis Deus**, the *dismal* or *cruel* god.
- **Lactum**, his name among the Sarmatians.
- **Larthy Tytiral**, *sovereign of Tartarus*, his name in Etruria.
- **Mantus** or **Manus,** the diminutive of *Summanus*, an Etruscan epithet.
- **Niger Deus**, *black god*, his epithet as god of the Infernal Regions.
- **Opertus**, the *concealed*.
- **Postulio**, a name assigned to him by Varro, under which he was worshipped on the shores of the lake Curtius, from the circumstance of the earth having opened at that spot, and of the Aruspices having presumed that the King of Death thus asked for (*postula*, I ask,) sacrifices.
- **Profundus Jupiter**, *deep* or *lower Jove*, from his being sovereign of the *deep*, or *infernal* regions.
- **Quietalis**, from *quies*, rest.
- **Rusor**, because all things *return* eventually to the earth.
- **Salutaris Divus**, a name assigned to him when he restored the dead to life. Whenever the gods wished to re-animate a body, Pluto let fall some drops of nectar from his urn upon the favoured person: this may account for bis being sometimes represented with an inverted vase.
- **Saturnius**, from his father *Saturn.*
- **Soranus**, his name among the Sabines, in the temple dedicated to him on Mount Soracte.
- **Stygius**, from the river Styx.

- **Summanus**, from *summus manium*, prince of the dead.
- **Tellumo**, a name derived from those treasures which Pluto possesses in the recesses of the earth. Tellumo denotes (according to Varro) the *creative* power of the earth, in opposition to Tellus the *productive*.
- **Uragus**, expressive of bis power over *fire*.
- **Urgus**, from *urgeo*, to impel.

In Egypt:

- **Amenthes**, a name of Pluto among the Egyptians. Plutarch informs us, that the word *Amenthes* has a reference to the doctrines of the metempsychosis, and signifies the *place which gives and receives*; on the belief that some vast gulf was assigned as a receptacle to the souls, which were about to animate new bodies.

Artistic representations

308.993x308.993px

Hades was depicted so infrequently in artwork, as well as mythology, because the Greeks were so afraid of him.[32] His artistic representations, which are generally found in Archaic pottery, are not even concretely thought of as the deity; however at this point in time it is heavily believed that the figures illustrated are indeed Hades.[23] He was later presented in the classical arts in the depictions of the Rape of Persephone.[86] Within these illustrations, Hades was often young, yet he was also shown as varying ages in other works.[23] Due to this lack of depictions, there weren't very strict guidelines when representing the deity.[23] On pottery, he has a dark beard and is presented as a stately figure on an "ebony throne."[35] His attributes in art include a scepter, cornucopia, rooster,[87] and a key, which both represented his control over the underworld and acted as a reminder that the gates of the Underworld were always locked so that souls could not leave.[88] Even if the doors were open, Cerberus, the three-headed guard dog of the Underworld, ensured that while all souls were allowed to enter into The Underworld freely, none could ever escape.[89] The dog is often portrayed next to the god as a means of easy identification, since no other deity relates to it so directly. Sometimes, artists painted Hades as looking away from the other gods, as he was disliked by them as well as humans.[23]

As Plouton, he was regarded in a more positive light. He holds a cornucopia, representing the gifts he bestows upon people as well as fertility, which he becomes connected to.[23]

Realm of Hades

In older Greek myths, the realm of Hades is the misty and gloomy[90] abode of the dead (also called Erebus[90]) where all mortals go when they die. Very few mortals could leave Hades once they entered. The exceptions, Heracles and Theseus, are heroic. Even Odysseus in his *Nekyia* (*Odyssey*, xi) calls up the spirits of the departed, rather than descend to them. Later Greek philosophy introduced the idea that all mortals are judged after death and are either rewarded or cursed.

There were several sections of the realm of Hades, including Elysium, the Asphodel Meadows, and Tartarus. Greek mythographers were not perfectly consistent about the geography of the afterlife. A contrasting myth of the afterlife concerns the Garden of the Hesperides, often identified with the Isles of the Blessed, where the blessed heroes may dwell.

Aeneas's journey to Hades through the entrance at Cumae mapped by Andrea de Jorio, 1825

In Roman mythology, the entrance to the Underworld located at Avernus, a crater near Cumae, was the route Aeneas used to descend to the realm of the dead.[91] By synecdoche, "Avernus" could be substituted for the underworld as a whole. The *di inferi* were a collective of underworld divinities.

For Hellenes, the deceased entered the underworld by crossing the Styx, ferried across by Charon kair'-on), who charged an *obolus*, a small coin for passage placed in the mouth of the deceased by pious relatives. Paupers and the friendless gathered for a hundred years on the near shore according to Book VI of Vergil's Aeneid. Greeks offered propitiatory libations to prevent the deceased from returning to the upper world to "haunt" those who had not given them a proper burial. The far side of the river was guarded by Cerberus, the three-headed dog defeated by Heracles (Roman Hercules). Passing beyond Cerberus, the shades of the departed entered the land of the dead to be judged.

The five rivers of the realm of Hades, and their symbolic meanings, are Acheron (the river of sorrow, or woe), Cocytus (lamentation), Phlegethon (fire), Lethe (oblivion), and Styx (hate), the river upon which even the gods swore and in which Achilles was dipped to render him invincible. The Styx forms the boundary between the upper and lower worlds. See also Eridanos.

The first region of Hades comprises the Fields of Asphodel, described in *Odyssey* xi, where the shades of heroes wander despondently among lesser spirits, who twitter around them like bats. Only libations of blood offered to them in the world of the living can reawaken in them for a time the sensations of humanity

Beyond lay Erebus, which could be taken for a euphonym of Hades, whose own name was dread. There were two pools, that of Lethe, where the common souls flocked to erase all memory, and the pool of Mnemosyne ("memory"), where the initiates of the Mysteries drank instead. In the forecourt of the palace of Hades and Persephone sit the three judges of the Underworld: Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Aeacus. There at the trivium sacred to Hecate, where three roads meet, souls are judged, returned to the Fields of Asphodel if they are neither virtuous nor evil, sent by the road to Tartarus if they are impious or evil, or sent to Elysium (Islands of the Blessed) with the "blameless" heroes.

In the Sibylline oracles, a curious hodgepodge of Greco-Roman and Judaeo-Christian elements, Hades again appears as the abode of the dead, and by way of folk etymology, it even derives *Hades* from the name Adam (the first man), saying it is because he was the first to enter there.[92] Owing to its appearance in the New Testament of the Bible, *Hades* also has a distinct meaning in Christianity.

Genealogy

Hades' family tree [93]

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In popular culture

See also

- Angra Mainyu
- Ereshkigal
- Ghosts in Mesopotamian religions
- Irkalla
- Last Judgment
- Osiris
- Saveasi'uleo
- Shiva
- The Golden Bough (mythology)
- Yama (East Asia)

Notes

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15. Reckoning by this reverse order is preferred by Poseidon in his speech at Homer, *Iliad* 15.187 (http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0012.tlg001.perseus-eng1:15.184-15.219)
16. Tripp, p. 256.
17. According to Dixon-Kennedy p. 143 (https://archive.org/stream/MikeDixonKennedy.....encyclopediaOfGrecoRomanMythologybyHouseOfBooks/MikeDixonKennedy.....encyclopediaOfGreco-romanMythologybyHouseOfBooks#page/n159/mode/2up) (following Kerényi 1951, p. 230) says "...his name means 'the unseen', a direct contrast to his brother Zeus, who was originally seen to represent the brightness of day". Ivanov p. 284, citing Beekes 1998, pp. 17–19, notes that derivation of Hades from a proposed *"som wid-* is semantically untenable; see also Beekes 2009, p. 34.
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27. Callimachus, *Hymn. in Pallad.* 130, with Friedrich Spanheim's note
28. Hesychius of Alexandria *s.v.*
29. Aeschyl. *ap. Athen.* iii. p. 99
30. Nicander, *ap. Athen.* xv. p. 684
31. "Ζεύς" (http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0058%3Aalphabetic+letter%3D*z%3Aentry+group%3D1%3Aentry%3D*zeu%2Fs) in: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* by Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott.
32. Tripp, p. 257.

33. Walter Burkert, in *The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age* 1992, (pp 90ff) compares this single reference with the Mesopotamian *Atra-Hasis*: "the basic structure of both texts is astonishingly similar" The drawing of lots is not the usual account. Hesiod (*Theogony*, 883) declares that Zeus overthrew his father and was acclaimed king by the other gods. "There is hardly another passage in Homer which comes so close to being a translation of an Akkadian epic," Burkert concludes (p. 91).
34. Poseidon speaks: "For when we threw the lots I received the grey sea as my abode, Hades drew the murky darkness, Zeus, however, drew the wide sky of brightness and clouds; the earth is common to all, and spacious Olympus." *Iliad 15.187*
35. "Hades the Greek God of the Underworld, Hades the unseen" (http://www.greekmyths-greekmythology.com/hades-greek-god-underworld/) *www.greekmyths-greekmythology.com*. Retrieved 2015-11-18.
36. Grant and Hazel, p. 236 (https://books.google.com/books?id=IKRDEAeout8C&pg=PA236).
37. *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 84–86 (http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0013.tlg002.perseus-eng1:40-86)
38. Grant and Hazel, p. 235 (https://books.google.com/books?id=IKRDEAeout8C&pg=PA235).
39. Gayley, p. 47 (https://archive.org/stream/classicmythsinen1911gayl#page/46/mode/2up)
40. Gayley, p. 104 (https://archive.org/stream/classicmythsinen1911gayl#page/104/mode/2up)
41. Gayley, pp. 165–166 (https://archive.org/stream/classicmythsinen1911gayl#page/164/mode/2up)
42. Guirand, p. 190.
43. *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, ln. 360-369; translated by Hugh G. Evelyn-White (http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0013.tlg002.perseus-eng1:360-369)
44. *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, ln. 398–400; translated by Hugh G. Evelyn-White (http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0013.tlg002.perseus-eng1:398-448)
45. Guirand, p. 175.
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47. Strabo, 8.3.14 (http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Strab.+8.3.14); Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10.728–730 (http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:latinLit:phi0959.phi006.perseus-eng1:10.652)
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52. "Hades never knows what is happening in the world above, or in Olympus, except for fragmentary information which comes to him when mortals strike their hands upon the earth and invoke him with oaths and curses" (Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* 1960: §31.e).
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54. See, Sally (2014). *The Greek Myths* (https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=onDwBQAAQBAJ&lpg=PA21&ots=onvECXoqnL&dq=hades%20attributes%20narcissus%20cypress&pg=PA21#v=onepage&q=hades%20attributes%20narcissus%20cypress&f=false) S&T. p. 21. Retrieved 18 January 2017.
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60. Hornblower, Spawforth, Eidinow, Simon, Antony, Esther (2014). *The Oxford Companion to Classical Civilization*. Oxford: OUP Oxford. p. 354. ISBN 9780191016752
61. Heraclitus, encountering the festival of the *Phallophoria*, in which phalli were paraded about, remarked in a surviving fragment: "If they did not order the procession in honor of the god and address the phallus song to him, this would be the most shameless behavior. But Hades is the same as Dionysos, for whom they rave and act like bacchantes", Kerényi 1976, pp. 239–240 (https://books.google.com/books?id=cXL-QIIhn5gC&pg=PA239).
62. Kerényi, Karl (1991). *Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter*. Princeton University Press. ISBN 9780691019154.
63. *Summary of Karl Kerenyi:* "The Hymn tells us that Persephone was abducted in Nysion pedion, or the Nysian Plain, a plain that was named after the Dionysian mountain of Nysa. Nysa was regarded as the birthplace and first home of Dionysus. The divine marriage of Plouton and Persephone was celebrated on 'the meadow'. The dangerous region that Kore let herself be lured to in search of flowers was likely not originally connected to Plouton but to Dionysus, as Dionysus himself had the strange surname of 'the gaping one', though despite this the notion that the wine god in his quality as the Lord of the Underworld does not appear on the surface of the hymn. People would not be able to detect the hidden meaning it if it wasn't for archaic vase portrayals." *Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter [P. 34, 35,].* "The Hymn to Demeter later mentions that Queen Metaneira of Eleusis later offers the disguised Demeter a beaker of sweet wine, something that Demeter refuses on the grounds that it would be against themis, the very nature of order and justice, for her to drink red wine and she instead invents a new beverage called kykeon to drink instead. The fact that Demeter refuses to drink wine on the grounds that it would be against themis indicates that she is well aware of who Persephone's abductor is, that it is the Subterranean cover name of Dionysus. The critic of the mysteries, the severe philosopher Herakleitos once declared "Hades is the same as Dionysos." The subterranean wine god was the ravisher, so how could Demeter accept something that was his gift to mankind" [P. 40]
64. *Summary of Karl Kerenyi:* "The book later refers to Herakles initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries so that he may enter the Underworld. In the iconography after his initiation Herakles in shown wearing a fringed white garment with a Dionysian deerskin thrown over it. Kore is shown with her mother Demeter and a snake twined around the Mystery basket, foreshadowing the secret, as making friends with snakes was Dionysian. [P. 48]. The god of the Anthesteria was Dionysus, who celebrated his marriage in Athens amid flowers, the opening of wine jars, and the rising up of the souls of the dead. [P. 49]. There are two reliefs in a marble votive relief of the fourth century BCE. One depicts Kore crowning her mother Demeter, the deities at the second altar are Persephone and her husband Dionysus as the recumbent god has the features of the bearded Dionysus rather than of Plouton. In his right hand, he raises not a cornucopia, the symbol of wealth, but a wine vessel and in his left, he bears the goblet for the wine. Over their heads an inscription reads "To the God and Goddess" [P. 151, 152]. The fragments of a gilded jar cover of the Kerch type show Dionysus, Demeter, little Ploutos, Kore, and a curly-haired boy clad in a long garment, one of the first sons of the Eleusinian king who was the first to be initiated. On another vase, Dionysus sits on his omphalos with his thryrsos in his left hand, sitting opposite Demeter, looking at each other severely. Kore is shown moving from Demeter towards Dionysus, as if trying to reconcile them [P. 162]. *Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter*
65. *Summary of Karl Kerenyi:* Kore and Thea are two different duplications of Persephone; Plouton and Theos are duplications of the subterranean Dionysus. The duplication of the mystery god as subterranean father and subterranean son, as Father Zagreus and the child Zagreus, husband and son of Persephone, has more to do with the mysteries of Dionysus than with the Eleusinian Mysteries. But a duplication of the chthonian, mystical Dionysus is provided even by his youthful aspect, which became distinguished and classical as the son of Semele from the son of Persephone. Semele, though not of Eleusinian origin, is also a double of Persephone [P. 155]. *Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter*
66. Kerényi 1967, p. 40 (https://books.google.com/books?id=ds1Wg01wzeYC&pg=PA40).
67. Kerényi 1976, p. 240.
68. Kerényi 1976, pp. 83 (https://books.google.com/books?id=cXL-QIIhn5gC&pg=PA83), 199 (https://books.google.com/books?id=cXL-QIIhn5gC&pg=PA199).
69. *Orphic Hymns to the Eumenides*, 69
70. Loyd, Alan B (2009). *What is a God?: Studies in the Nature of Greek Divinity*. The Classical Press of Wales. ISBN 1905125356.

71. Alan B Loyd: ""The identification of Hades and Dionysus does not seem to be a particular doctrine of Herakleitos, nor does it commit him to monotheism. The evidence for a cult connection between the two is quite extensive, particularly in Southern Italy, and the Dionysiac mysteries are associated with death rituals."
72. http://www.my-favourite-planet.de/images/people/d-01/dionysus/athens_dj-28082013-2-0833c_dionysus-eleusis.jpg
73. http://www.my-favourite-planet.de/images/people/d-01/dionysus/athens_dj-28082013-2-0826d_dionysus-eleusis.jpg
74. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/22/NAMA_181_Eubouleus_2.JPG/477px-NAMA_181_Eubouleus_2.JPG
75. http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/artifact?name=London+B+425&object=Vase
76. Taylor-Perry, Rosemarie (2003). *The God who Comes: Dionysian Mysteries Revisited*. Barnes & Noble. pp. 4, 22, 91, 92, 94, 168. ISBN 9780875862309.
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78. Andrzej Wypustek (Ph.D) (https://translate.google.com.au/translate?hl=en&sl=pl&u=https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrzej_Wypustek&prev=search) "Votive inscriptions frequently mentioned Pluto but very rarely Hades. Particularly at Eleusis, the Pluto cult was for a deity who, like Persephone and Demeter, was favourably disposed to humans. He was frequently portrayed as a majestic elder with a sceptre, ranch, cornucopia, pomegranate, or drinking vessel in his hand; sometimes he was accompanied by an eagle. His iconography resembled that of Zeus, and especially that of some chthonic personification of the ruler of the gods, above all Zeus Meilichios. We can now go a step further. The nearest equivalent to the contrast between Hades and Pluto as presented in the Theophile epigram can be found in the Orphic Hymns, which are assumed to have originated from the ἔδη of the Dionysiac mystic circles in Asia Minor of the 1st – 3rd centuries. Hymn 41 worships Antaia, i.e. Demeter, the goddess who had searched for her daughter in Hades and discovered her in 'the sacred bed of the sacred chthonic Zeus'. This formulation in itself is not surprising because the name Zeus (as a synonym for a deity and ruler) was used in reference to Hades-Pluto as the ruler of the underworld. In an interesting, though, sadly only partly preserved inscription from Appia-Murathanlar in the Tembris Valley (in 3rd century AD Phrygia) the deceased appeals to "Zeus, god of the dead [φθιμένων*], Pluto" to protect his grave. The term "Chthonic Zeus" could, however, mean something more than a mere euphemism for the name Hades. The idea of defining Zeus as χθόνιος, κατα (χθόνιος) ὄλλος or simply Hades had been present in ancient Greek literature from Homer to Nonnos. This was a sort of extension, aspect or 'shadow' of the universal power of Zeus in the kingdom of the dead, where he was the judge of the dead and the also the consort of Persephone-Kore. Moreover, he was the provider of riches, Πλουτοδότης; a personification which was abbreviated to Πλούτων. Among other things, he controlled the crops and it was to him (as well as to Demeter) that the farmers turned for the promise of a good harvest. These are hardly well known traditions today. Some scholars maintain that their obscurity is on account of the secret role they played in the mysteries. … Therefore the Orphics worshipped Pluto as the saviour and judge of the deceased, as Zeus χθόνιος. They most likely assumed that Zeus had another embodiment of sorts in the underworld, in Hades. The effect of this assumption was the myth, known to us in several versions, of how Zeus had lain with Persephone (even though she was his daughter). The so-called great Orphic tablet of Thurii refers to the abduction of Persephone by Zeus, who then fathers her son, Dionysus. Their child was revered by the Orphics as Dionysus Zagreus, Dionysus Iacchus, which shows how much importance they attached to the love affair of that particular couple." (*Images of Eternal Beauty in Funerary Verse Inscriptions of the Hellenistic Period*)
79. Gantz, Timothy (1996). *Early Greek Myth*. Johns Hopkins University Press. ISBN 978-0-8018-5360-9.
80. Timothy Gantz "Thus it appears that at times Zeus and Hades represented simply different facets of a single extended divine power" (*Early Greek Myth*)
81. Rigoglioso, Marguerite (2010). *Virgin Mother Goddesses of Antiquity*. Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978-0-230-11312-1.
82. Marguerite Rigoglioso (https://www.amazon.com/Marguerite-Rigoglioso/e/B001V8MSCI) "Given that Zeus was also sometimes portrayed as having an incarnation in the underworld that was closely identified with Hades, we can read here that Zeus and Hades were essentially two representations of the same god. The idea of Hades equals Dionysus, and that this dual god impregnated Persephone in the Eleusinian tradition, therefore, is in perfect accord with the story that Zeus impregnated her with Dionysus in Orphic myth, given that Hades equals Zeus, as well. Moreover, what we see from this esoteric complex is that, in seeding Persephone, Zeus/Hades/Dionysus created what Kerenyi perceptively calls "a second, a little Dionysus," a "subterranean Zeus." (*Virgin Mother Goddesses of Antiquity*)
83. Rosemarie Taylor-Perry: ""Interestingly it is often mentioned that Zeus, Hades and Dionysus were all attributed to being the exact same god… Being a tripartite deity Hades is also Zeus, doubling as being the Sky God or Zeus, Hades abducts his 'daughter' and paramour Persephone. The taking of Kore by Hades is the act which allows the conception and birth of a second integrating force: Iacchos (Zagreus-Dionysus), also known as Liknites, the helpless infant form of that Deity who is the unifier of the dark underworld (chthonic) realm of Hades and the Olympian ("Shining") one of Zeus."
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88. Tripp, p. 257; Grant and Hazel, p. 235 (https://books.google.com/books?id=IKRDEAeout8C&pg=PA235)
89. Tripp, p. 258.
90. Homeric Hymn to Demeter
91. *Aeneid*, book 6.
92. *Sibylline Oracles* I, 101–3
93. This chart is based upon Hesiod's *Theogony*, unless otherwise noted.

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External links

Maps of the Underworld (Greek mythology)

- Color map
- Ancient map

The God Hades

- *Discourse to the Greeks Concerning Hades* by Flavius Josephus

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